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ABSTRACT

Pursuant to the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, this document comprises the Illinois Council of Vocational Education's evaluative report on the adequacy and effectiveness of the state's vocational education delivery system. After an introductory overview of the growing need for vocational education, the report focuses on the following topics: (1) provision of student services, including student services plans, views from the public, and survey results; (2) guidance and counseling services, including federal requirements, plans, state initiatives, and career guidance centers; (3) special services at community colleges, including support services and special programs; and (4) occupational information, specifically, the effectiveness of the HORIZONS program which analyzes and synthesizes technical labor market data and educational statistics. The report concludes with lists of evaluative findings and recommendations. Resources are included, along with a membership list of the Illinois Council of Vocational Education. (TE)

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Support Services for Students

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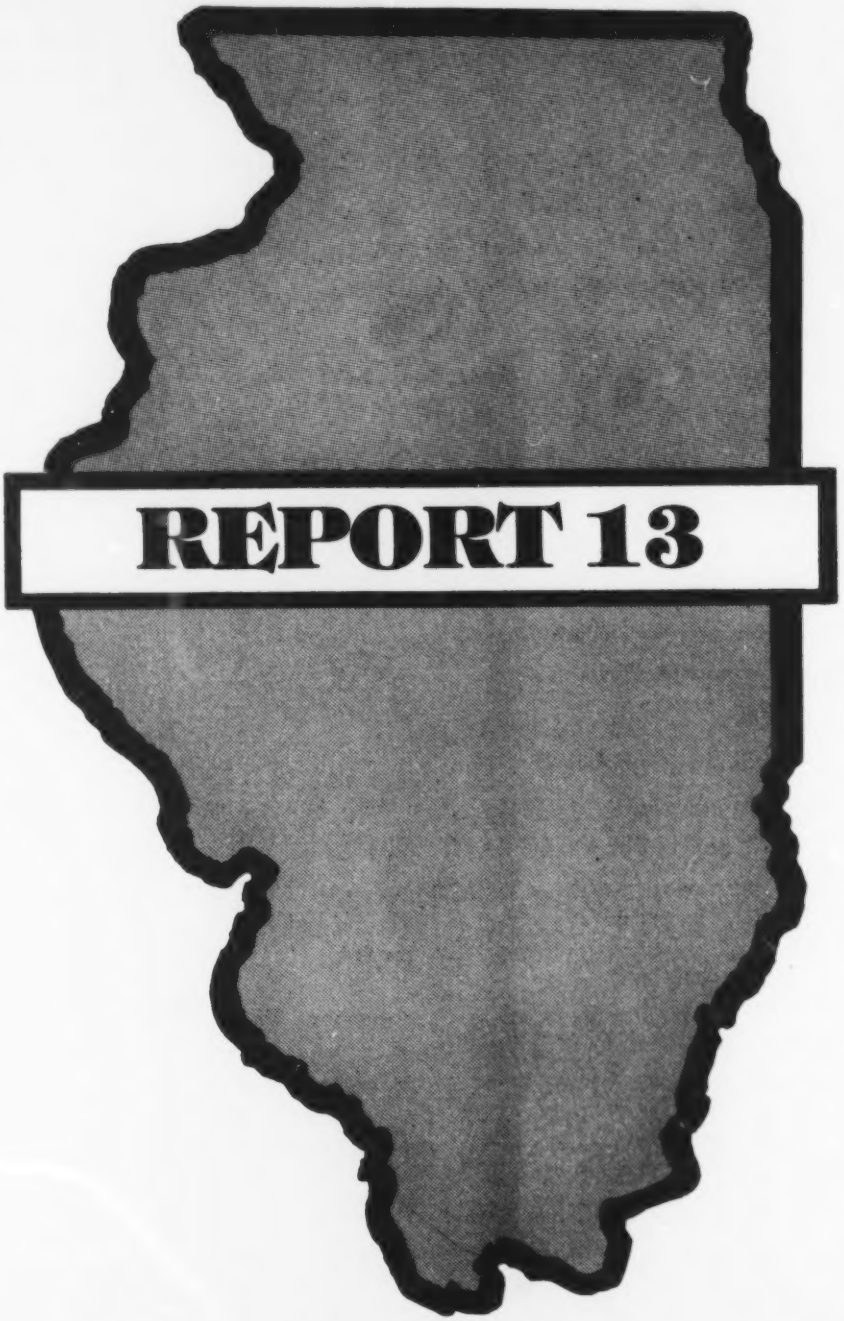

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ILLINOIS COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
1987-1988

This report is one in a series of 25 technical reports prepared to fulfill mandates of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, 1984.

TECHNICAL REPORTS
1987-1988

Technical reports of the Illinois Council on Vocational Education in this series designed to fulfill the requirements of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act, 1984 include:

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Report 2 DIALOGUE WITH EDUCATIONAL LEADERS: IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Report 3 ADVICE TO THE PRIVATE SECTOR

Report 4 DISTRIBUTION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION FUNDS

Report 5 ACCESS OF TARGETED POPULATIONS TO QUALITY VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 6 EVALUATING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN ILLINOIS

Report 7 PRIVATE-SECTOR INVOLVEMENT IN VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 8 IMPROVING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION QUALITY

Report 9 ACADEMIC FOUNDATIONS AND APPLICATION OF TECHNOLOGY

Report 10 REDUCING THE LIMITING EFFECTS OF SEX-ROLE STEREOTYPING

Report 11 PREPARING AND MAINTAINING WORKERS

Report 12 SERVING ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AREAS

Report 13 SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

Report 14 CONSUMER AND HOMEMAKING EDUCATION

Report 15 JTPA 8% FUNDS

Report 16 ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF JTPA

Report 17 PERCEPTIONS WHICH AFFECT COORDINATION BETWEEN JTPA AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 18 TECHNICAL COMMITTEES AND ILLINOIS CURRICULUM

Report 19 EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT: WHAT'S WORKING? WHAT'S NOT?
(Public Hearings Report)

Report 20 PROGRESS TOWARD IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION FOR EMPLOYMENT POLICY
(A Survey Report)

Report 21 REGIONAL DELIVERY SYSTEMS: OPINIONS EXPRESSED BY BOARD MEMBERS AND ADMINISTRATORS (A Survey Report)

Report 22 EFFECTS OF THE ICoVE 1986-87 STUDY OF THE COORDINATION OF JTPA AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Report 23 PERCEPTIONS RE: ADEQUACY AND EFFECTIVENESS OF JTPA AND V.E. PERKINS ACT PROGRAMS IN ILLINOIS

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ILLINOIS COUNCIL ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

100 ALZINA BUILDING • 100 NORTH FIRST STREET • SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62702-5186 • PHONE 217/782-2892

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Secretary-Treasurer
Chicago Journeymen Plumbers' Local Union #130
Chicago

DATE: March 8, 1989

TO: Governor James R. Thompson
Lauro Cavazos, Secretary of Education
Elizabeth Dole, Secretary of Labor
Illinois State Board of Education
Illinois Job Training Coordinating Council

Under the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, the Illinois Council on Vocational Education has been charged to evaluate the vocational education delivery system in terms of its adequacy and effectiveness. This report focuses on the system rather than the results, which are addressed in Report 5 (Access of Targeted Populations to Quality Vocational Education).

It has become apparent that internships for all guidance counselors, such as the VIP program, must be part of the State's plan. Structure must be provided for guidance counseling and placement services in the State.

Sincerely,

Ina Minsky

Ina Minsky

REPORT 13

SUPPORT SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

A Report on
the System Used to Deliver Support Services
with Emphasis on
Guidance and Counseling Services Provided

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Hartzel Black	Ronald Borelli
James Denny	Ina Minsky
Dr. Joseph Piland	Gordon Ropp
Valee Salone	Mary Beth Stine

Illinois Council on Vocational Education
100 Alzina Building
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62702

1987-1988

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PREFACE

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act of 1984, requires the Illinois Council on Vocational Education (ICoVE) to "evaluate the vocational education delivery systems assisted under the Perkins Act in terms of its adequacy and effectiveness in achieving the purposes of the Act." This report, in conjunction with Report 5, is the evaluation of the purpose of the Perkins Act which states:

> . . .utilize a full range of supportive services, special programs, and guidance counseling and placement to achieve the basic purposes of this Act. [Section 2(7)]

The Act continues by requiring the Council to "advise the Governor, the State board, the State job training coordinating council, the Secretary [of Education], and the Secretary of Labor of these findings and recommendations."

Report 5, Access of Targeted Populations to Quality Vocational Education, describes the targeted populations to be served, identifies the number of individuals served, and assesses the services and special programs provided to these various populations. Report 11 provides additional information about services for adult workers.

This report focuses on the system (i.e., the adequacy and effectiveness of the delivery system) established to plan and deliver support services and special programs, rather than the results as addressed in Report 5. Guidance counseling and placement services are described more extensively because these are not included in other reports.

For information regarding funding of support services and special programs for targeted populations, see Report 4, Distribution of Vocational Education Funds.

Information for this report was gathered from documents and unpublished data provided by the Illinois State Board of Education, the Illinois Community College Board, and the Illinois Occupational Information Coordinating Committee. Transcripts of ICoVE's public hearings and presentations to the Council were also used.

ACRONYMS & TERMS USED

ABE = Adult Basic Education
ASE = Adult Secondary Education
DAVTE = Department of Adult, Vocational and Technical Education
EFE = Education for Employment
ESL = English as a Second Language
FY = Fiscal Year
GBO = Guidance by Objectives
ICCB = Illinois Community College Board
ICP = Individualized Career Plan
ICoVE = Illinois Council on Vocational Education
ISBE = Illinois State Board of Education
RDS = Regional Delivery Systems

INTRODUCTION

Today's workforce faces unprecedented challenges for competition in world markets and literacy at all levels of technology. At the same time, demographic characteristics of today's new and young workers depict populations which historically have been unserved or underserved by the education and job training systems in place.

The shrinking number of jobs requiring neither specific job skills nor mastery of the three R's is rapidly limiting the number of jobs for workers who have received minimum education and little or no special preparation for employment. If Illinois expects to enjoy economic stability and growth, it must *pull out all the stops* to assure that preparation for employment is acquired by new entrants prior to entering the labor force. Additionally Illinois must provide retraining and upgrading to 2,000,000 or nearly 40% of its current workforce by the year 2000.

The number of youth and adults who have too few skills and too little educational achievement to benefit from job preparation, retraining, and/or upgrading is alarming. These individuals require a significant amount of specially designed support services in order to prepare them for and assist them in acquiring job readiness.

Student support services must expand and change rapidly in order to provide necessary services to such a diverse population of youth and adults.

Recent emphasis on student assessment, caused in part by new assessment requirements of job training clients initially will be a burden on support services personnel. However, this assessment will contribute significantly to the development of the student or client individualized career plan with both program and service needs identified.

Career counseling, as well as personal counseling are gaining renewed emphasis. In part, this emphasis can be attributed to surging changes in the workplace and the social problems inherent in individuals representing at-risk population groups.

Support services such as transportation, child care, notetakers, financial support, and readers often provide the key which makes participation in preparation for employment programs possible. This is particularly true for at-risk populations such as single parents, economically disadvantaged, and the handicapped or disabled.

Transition of program participants from school to work, in addition to placement services, is becoming a valuable service needed by both vocational education students and job training clients.

Remedial services, e.g. tutorial and remedial education, help to bring individual achievement in education, particularly academic skills, up to the

necessary level needed for participants to benefit from education and/or training for employment in today's technical world of work. The application of technology to the three R's advanced basic academic education to a new level of comprehension. Our nation's educational system must simply do a better job and set higher goals for all students if our nation is going to maintain a competitive workforce.

Support services are sometimes designed to serve specific population groups such as economic or educationally disadvantaged, handicapped, single parents, teen parents, dislocated workers, limited-English speaking, dropouts, women, and minorities, i.e. otherwise known as the at-risk population. Services are specialized and often individualized. ***America's Shame, America's Hope***, (the Mott Foundation) estimates and notes that only 5% of state education funds are servicing at-risk youth and that evidence exists to suggest some educational reforms are actually harming at-risk students.

Attention must focus on support services for students to assure that large groups do not "fall through the cracks." The nation's growing workforce is becoming increasingly dependent on all segments of the population, including those who historically have been at-risk, to fill jobs.

The cost of special support services continues to grow, but these support services are essential to the success of education for employment as well as to the success of job training. These services make programs accessible to many members of the at-risk groups who otherwise would be either unable to attend or unable to benefit from the programs.

PROVISION OF STUDENT SERVICES

Provisions of the Perkins Act give considerable emphasis to providing services to special population groups in order to assure their access to quality vocational education programs. Report 5, Access of Targeted Populations . . . focuses on needed services and the quantity and quality of services provided. The process or system used to provide the services is the focus of this report.

Since adoption of the Education for Employment Policy and Administrative Plan in 1984, the State Board has been working toward implementation of that policy. During the past four years, particularly the last two years, efforts to develop a system or process to provide various programs and services through secondary regional delivery systems (RDS) and community college districts have been extensive.

Student Services Plans

During 1987 and 1988, secondary districts and community colleges launched activities to assess the special needs of students, identified existing services and resources for meeting these needs, and explored new avenues of cooperatively providing the services. Beginning in FY 89, the RDS will become the delivery system for services to secondary students. Services will be carefully articulated between community colleges and the RDS. The system which has emerged from efforts occurring in the last two years is described in this document.

In materials prepared for RDS and community college EFE plan development, the State Board describes student services as "those services necessary to support Education for Employment efforts apart from administration and in addition to instruction. . . . services are designed to address individual needs to enable students to succeed in instructional programs, to make the transition from educational settings to the work place or to further work related education to meet the special needs of specific populations."

When submitting plans to the State Board, the delivery systems describe how student services will be provided to students in the area. The contents of those plans follow:

> Student Services Committee. Each secondary regional delivery system is to establish a student services committee composed of representatives from various aspects of student services such as guidance, single parents, homemakers, special needs, and sex equity. The committee reviews student needs and resources for meeting those needs and advises the RDS and community college district concerning a plan for providing services.

Coordination and Articulation. Student services available through the educational agencies and other agencies within the geographic area and EFE system are to be coordinated for maximum use of resources. Articulation between secondary and postsecondary programs is to be carefully spelled out. Ways to share and transfer student records are designed into the systems and noted in the plan.

Disadvantaged, Handicapped, Limited-English-Proficient. Services to be provided to populations having special needs are delineated in the EFE plan. The plans describe the need and the responsibility for the services. Again, articulation and sharing of responsibilities between the RDS and community colleges are essential elements of the plans.

Sex Equity (Building Fairness). The delivery systems may apply for Building Fairness grants to help provide services necessary to overcome sex bias and sex-role stereotyping. These grants become part of the student services plan. Additional services may be provided or provided without special grant funds. All systems must have a plan describing how requirements will be met.

Single Parents and Homemakers (Building Opportunity). Each delivery system develops a plan for serving single parents and homemakers. Criteria include 1) the number of single parents receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children, 2) the unemployment rate, and 3) the number of births to teens (used to award special Building Opportunity grants to those most in need).

Counseling and Guidance. The counseling and guidance plan has eight key components to be addressed by each delivery system. During the planning process, the system identifies components needing improvement. Each component so identified must then be accompanied by a plan for improvement.

Views from the Public

Some comments expressed to ICoVE at public hearings are listed below. Most comments were in reference to the impact of EFE on student services.

"Schools must develop student services programs which help students select proper programs for their abilities or future opportunities."

"Vocational education will have expanded services available for students and teachers such as access to assessment centers for disadvantaged and handicapped students and specialized discipline services." [Re: EFE]

"Student services committee has been meeting regularly to develop a student services plan."

"Counselors need to have updated work experience just like teachers. They have to keep pace with what's going on in the real world if they are going to help kids transition from school to work."

"If the state staff doesn't make recommendations or acknowledgements of student services which are currently provided because of these funds, students will lose these services while another structure is developed by the regions." [Re: EFE and regional delivery systems]

"Why don't guidance counselors help seniors get employment after graduation just like they help them get scholarships to college?"

"[Guidance and counseling] . . . There is some work going on. There has been some assessment to assess what's going on regionally, but there has been nothing put in place in terms of a consistent formula. That is also a part of what's being worked into next year's plans. Progress isn't as rapid in regionalization in our area as one might hope and maybe one might expect."

"Student services areas, . . . guidance departments in some schools have not been brought into the system . . . being the last to know the status of what's going on is a real problem." [Re: EFE]

"Colleges, universities, trade schools, the military and everybody else has a special day set aside to recruit our students. Business and industry should have a day to come in and hire our vocational graduates."

"Counselors are counseling kids away from vocational courses because many of them don't understand what we're all about. They use our programs for dumping grounds and then we have to tear down our programs."

"Current career information programs, career counseling, and program marketing strategies are not adequately informing students of the emerging employment climate."

"Foresee only more enhancement of current services in the future." [Re: EFE]

"Expanded services to students concerning vocational education is good."

Survey Results

In a survey conducted by ICoVE, members of the vocational education community and the job training community were asked to rate how adequately

and effectively they believed Illinois had met the purposes of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act. Responses included 28 (71%) community college personnel, 34 (55%) staff of the regional delivery systems (vocational education) and 20 (76%) service delivery area (SDA) personnel (JTPA).

Respondents were asked to use a 1-5 continuum for their rating with five representing "very" adequately and effectively and one representing "not very" adequately and effectively.

The average rating regarding the adequacy and effectiveness with which Illinois has **"utilized a full range of supportive services, special programs, and guidance counseling and placement services. . .."** resulted as shown below.

Question: How adequately and effectively has Illinois met the purpose of the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act to utilize a full range of supportive services, special programs, and guidance counseling and placement services?

Response Group	Average Rate
• average rate given by community college personnel	3.32
• average rate given by staff of the regional delivery systems (vocational education)	3.24
• average rate given by service delivery area (SDA) personnel.	3.13

Continum: 5 = very, 1 = not very

Federal Requirements

Passage of the Perkins Act brought new dimensions to guidance and counseling programs. Services to be provided with funds authorized by the Act were clearly stated. States were also required to maintain the effort for guidance and counseling expenditures as established in fiscal year 1984 under the Vocational Education Act of 1963.

A portion of Title IIB funds are used for providing guidance and counseling services. About $1,000,000 of the program improvement funds are used for guidance and counseling services in Illinois annually. Funds authorized under Part D, Title III of the Perkins Act, specifically for guidance and counseling, have never been appropriated and made available to the states.

The Perkins Act designates that guidance and counseling funds must be used to provide vocational education students and potential students with programs designed to assist individuals to do the following:

- acquire self-assessment, career planning, career decision-making, and employability skills;
- transition from education and training to work;
- maintain marketability of current job skills in established occupations;
- develop new skills to move away from declining occupational fields and enter new and emerging fields in high technology;
- develop mid-career job search skills and clarify career goals; and
- obtain and use information on financial assistance for postsecondary vocational education and job training.

As emphasized throughout the Perkins Act, services to targeted populations, partnerships with the private sector, and increased access to programs are to be given emphasis in guidance and counseling programs. Programs are to be characterized by encouraging the following:

- elimination of sex, age, handicapping condition, and race bias and stereotyping;
- community outreach;
- collaboration of the family, the community, business, industry, and labor; and
- accessibility to all, including women, minorities, handicapped and economically disadvantaged.

Plans for Guidance and Counseling Services

Community college districts and secondary regional delivery systems develop plans for delivering guidance and counseling services to their students. The elements addressed by these plans include:

- General counseling (educational, career and personal counseling, self-understanding, personal goals, values, and needs);
- Assessment and evaluation (understanding of skills, abilities, interests in relation to future education and career choices);
- Career information (understanding and learning about occupations, labor market trends, matching abilities and interest with career choices);
- Educational/career planning (use of decision-making skills for selecting courses and programs to attain future goals);
- Placement (assist students to make the transition to employment or further education);
- Special populations (needed special assistance to disadvantaged, handicapped, limited English proficient, single parents, homemakers, or at-risk youth);
- Sex equity (information to increase awareness regarding nontraditional career options); and
- Follow-up (information regarding program completers and leavers).

The guidance and counseling plans for the delivery systems provide a framework for services in accordance with the Perkins Act. However, there are elements of the program design emphasized in the Act that are vaguely addressed in the Illinois plan. For example, the plans do not illustrate how guidance and counseling staff plan to work with individuals who are making mid-career job changes. No emphasis is evident as it relates to community outreach, involvement of the family, or involvement of the private sector. Other plan weaknesses are related to assisting students to transition from school to work and maintaining marketability of current skills. No mention is made of providing guidance and counseling services to potential vocational education students.

State Initiatives

Parental Guidance. Through state initiatives, a project has been completed that designed a special brochure for parents. The brochure provides information about the process of career decision making and career choice and describes the parental role.

Counselor Competencies. Competencies needed by counselors to work effectively in the regional delivery system were identified through the use of Perkins funds. The competencies include:

- organizing an Education for Employment Student Services committee,
- coordinating student services activities,
- assessing needs for regional student services,
- establishing leadership with the Student Services committee, and
- conducting an inventory of resources for student services.

A module concerning each of the competencies has been developed and disseminated to the regional delivery systems.

ICP (Individualized Career Plan). A resource book to be used in developing ICPs was developed and distributed to the education for employment community. The book contains sample ICPs, suggestions for using ICPs, and model programs to assist others in implementing the ICP. Although the State Board and ICoVE have long supported use of the ICP, the EFE plans are not asked to indicate whether or not ICPs are used as part of the guidance and counseling services.

Guidance by Objectives. A special project was funded (approximately $115,000) to assist in developing a guidance and counseling program to address the intent of federal legislation. Using input from counselors and other educators, the project recommended guidelines for a comprehensive guidance and counseling program.

The Guidance by Objectives (GBO) project was designed to assist counselors with 1) program development and management, 2) methods of needs assessment and evaluation, 3) methods and formats for writing counseling plans, and 4) guidelines for programs.

GBO is a four-step approach to management. The steps include:

- assessing needs,
- developing a plan based on need,
- implementing the guidance plan, and
- evaluating effectiveness of the plan.

A handbook for GBO was developed, as were microcomputer packages designed for planning and evaluating. The program provides a system for program accountability.

The Illinois Guidance by Objectives program was selected by the U.S. Department of Education as one of two recommended models for developing accountability in guidance and counseling services.

Career Guidance Centers

Current Structure. Strategically located career guidance centers provide a network for career guidance services in twelve sites throughout the state. The Career Guidance Centers provide services needed in the surrounding area. In recent years, Centers have helped the secondary regional delivery systems establish the student services committees and initiate planning activities for the region's student services program. The Centers have been instrumental in helping the community college districts and RDSs develop the articulation and coordination strategies they will use in delivering guidance and counseling and other support services for students.

During 1987 and 1988, Career Guidance Centers focused attention on eight program priorities:

- Education for Employment
- Guidance by Objectives

- Sex equity
- Individualized career planning
- Labor market information
- Placement
- Community resources
- Computerized career guidance

The Career Guidance Centers are funded with funds available from the Perkins Act (approximately $877,000). Services provided by the Centers during FY 1987 and 1988 include: (First number represents 1987; second number represents 1988.)

- Responded to 15,142-19,340 requests for materials and services.
- Conducted 254-284 workshops about career guidance; 5,315-5,720 counselors, teachers/administrators, and public agency personnel attended.
- Prepared 38-42 newsletters containing career guidance information; distribution was 35,416-43,527 copies.
- Provided technical assistance to 852 counselors and vocational educators concerning career guidance programs.
- Awarded 181-231 vocational guidance improvement grants to assist guidance providers and student services committees to provide needed in-service education and upgrading of guidance programs.

Future Directions. In order to consolidate and better align services with existing boundaries of the State Board's DAVTE, a special project will be implemented in FY 1989 to provide a statewide network of consultants for career guidance and counseling. The network will also include consultants for the Building Fairness (sex equity) programs.

When implemented, one career guidance and counseling consultant and one Building Fairness consultant will be located in each of six DAVTE regions. One each will be located in the Cook and the Lake County areas (Chicago).

Funds from the Perkins Act will support the initiative (career guidance and counseling, $673,000; Building Fairness, $307,000). Part of the allocated funds ($200,000) will be used to provide mini-grants to the 61 secondary regional delivery systems and the 39 community college districts.

SPECIAL SERVICES AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

In addition to special funding provided through the Perkins Act, state general revenues available to the Illinois Community College Board provide disadvantaged student grants to community college districts. Grants support special services which meet the diverse needs of community college students.

Disadvantaged student grants serve all community college students, not only vocational or occupational education students. Students enrolled in occupational programs and vocational skills courses account for approximately 40% or 270,842 of the total community college enrollment of 680,123. Approximately 55,000 additional students are enrolled in non-credit courses.

Five types of support services are given through these grants, totalling $7,932,000 in fiscal year 1988. Using the 40% enrollment figure, prorating of these funds would indicate $3,172,800 were expended to provide the support services to occupational education students. Funds are distributed using a $20,000 minimum per community college with the additional allocation being formula-based on student-credit-hour enrollments. The ICCB reports grants ranged from $32,000 to $5,000,000 with a median of $63,000. Descriptions of the support services follow.

Support Services

Community colleges served 277,512 students (duplicated) through disadvantaged grants in fiscal year 1988. This was 30,773 more than in 1987. All 38 community college districts participated (State Community College receives separate funding). The numbers of students participating in each service provided are unduplicated.

Tutoring. Tutoring services were provided in 35 of the districts and served the largest number of students, 87,553 (about 13% of the total enrollments). The average contact was 7.37 hours per student. Based on a 40% occupational enrollment rate, approximately 35,021 occupational students benefited.

Educational/Career Counseling. Counseling services assisted 69,149 disadvantaged community college students in 29 districts. The average contact per student was 2.65 hours.

Testing/Evaluation. Testing and evaluation services were funded in 35 districts; 85,721 students were served. The average contact hours were 2.03 per student. Using the 40% occupational enrollment rate, an estimated 34,288 of the students receiving testing and evaluation services would have been occupational education enrollees.

Referrals to External Agencies. Referrals to other agencies for services or support are provided by 26 community college districts. A total of 5,805

students benefited from referral services, averaging .86 contact hours per student.

Other Direct Support Services. Direct services provided to community college students include readers for the visually impaired, notetakers/interpreters for the hearing impaired, and outreach services and special retention programs for disadvantaged students. A total of 29,284 students received these support services, averaging 6.89 hours per student. Approximately 11,714 of these students were occupational, based on the overall 40% enrollment. (Outreach and retention programs were added in 1988.)

Special Programs

Special Literacy Development Programs. Special programs for literacy showed an 11% increase in 1988. There were 11,803 students served in 15 community college districts. The number of hours spent (contact hours) showed a 50% increase, with 77% of the contact hours being used for tutoring. Other services received included counseling, assessment testing, and direct services.

In addition to literacy programs provided by the disadvantaged grants, funds for literacy are also provided by the Secretary of State, ICCB state funds, Adult Education Act grants, and local funds.

Special Minority Programs. Fifteen community college districts used grant funds to offer support programs for minority students. Support services included tutoring, counseling (peer, career, academic, and financial aid), workshops, bilingual computer-assisted instruction, parenting programs, parent self-esteem, assessment, and testing. A total of 126,727 students (unduplicated) received the services, averaging 4.1 hours each.

ABE, ASE, ESL, and Remedial Courses. During FY 88, 51,539 community college students (duplicated count) participated in classes funded by disadvantaged grants. The types of courses and enrollments included:

25,732 ABE, Adult Basic Education
10,128 ASE, Adult Secondary Education
8,340 ESL, English as a Second Language
7,339 Remedial

HORIZONS

Occupational and education information useful to both youth and adults who are making career decisions is provided by a program known as HORIZONS. HORIZONS is administered by the Illinois Occupational Information Coordinating Committee (IOICC). Agency members of the IOICC include:

- Board of Governors of State Colleges and Universities
- Illinois Board of Higher Education
- Illinois Community College Board
- Illinois Council on Vocational Education
- Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs
- Illinois Department of Employment Security
- Illinois Department of Labor
- Illinois Department of Rehabilitation Services
- Illinois Job Training Coordinating Council
- Illinois State Board of Education
- Illinois Department of Public Aid

The HORIZONS program "analyzes and synthesizes the technical labor market data and educational statistics available from a variety of sources into a system of understandable, current and localized career information." Information in HORIZONS is available to, and used by, public and private institutions, public agencies, and private organizations, and the individuals they serve or who participate in their programs.

HORIZONS is available in hard copy, various computerized systems, and card sort. A Users' Handbook accompanies the Career Information System. The three-part system includes: 1) occupational information, 2) programs of study and training, and 3) school information. The User Handbook contains QUEST, a questionnaire designed to assess interests and abilities to help the user get started in exploring various occupations.

The Occupational Information component of HORIZONS is organized around occupational clusters. Within each cluster, occupations found in Illinois are listed. Each listing includes the following kinds of information about the occupation.

- Description
- Specific and related occupations
- Aptitudes
- Work setting and the kinds of employers using these occupations
- Hiring practices, where training is available
- Preparation, related educational programs, needed experience and training
- Current employment by state region
- Wages, by region of the state
- Outlook, potential openings, growth
- Skills
- Tips about the occupation
- Bibliography
- Where to obtain more information, such as trade or professional organizations

The Program of Study and Training component of HORIZONS cross-references program classifications with the career information system. Information presented in HORIZONS about programs for study and training in preparation for an occupation include:

- Program admission requirements
- Typical course work included in the program
- Graduation requirements
- List of schools where programs are available and the degree or certificate granted
- Things to know concerning availability of evening and part-time programs
- Programs related to the occupation
- Occupations directly related or associated

The segment of HORIZONS pertaining to School Information includes information about public institutions (community colleges and universities) as well as private institutions (two- and four-year colleges), business/commercial, and vocational/trade schools. Information includes:

- Name, address, and contact information
- Visitation, lodging, and community data
- Type of school
- Enrollment
- School calendar
- Tuition
- Admission standards and deadlines
- Financial aid programs
- General areas of study
- Accreditation

Impact

HORIZONS is currently being used by 200 high school districts, 17 community colleges, 3 SDAs, 3 Dislocated Worker Centers, 65 libraries, 7 colleges and universities, 50 Department of Rehabilitation sites, 25 Employment Security/Job Service locations, and 5 others. HORIZONS has been a coordinated effort of Illinois agencies to provide both youth and adults with consistent and up-to-date information about careers in Illinois. Little evidence exists to indicate that the product has been adequately endorsed and marketed. Concerted efforts to make HORIZONS accessible to all students are needed.

Information about job openings is not included in HORIZONS. However, the IOICC, along with the Illinois Department of Employment Security, provides information about openings, replacement needs, and supply data. HORIZONS provides a long-range "outlook" concerning growth and decline of each occupation in general. HORIZONS information is updated annually.

Elementary Career Awareness

To assist elementary students to acquire information useful in choosing courses when they enter high school, state funds are used to provide prevocational experiences and occupational information. Once funded with federal funds, elementary schools are allocated one dollar per student for elementary programs providing career education and information. Approximately 977,000 school children benefit from the service annually.

CONCLUSIONS

The delivery system at the state, regional, and local levels for providing supportive services, special programs, and guidance and counseling and placement services to students is complex. The system incorporates state-initiated, regionally initiated and locally initiated services. Services are generated from individual needs, as well as from emphasis provided by federal legislation. A variety of funding sources and procedures contribute to the complexity, as do efforts to link numerous sources of federal, state, and local service providers.

ICoVE's review of support services and special programs, including guidance and counseling and placement resulted in several conclusions.

- The ISBE Policy for EFE addresses the need to provide services to help students succeed in vocational education.
- Support services provided by funds under the Perkins Act focus at the secondary level with some attention being given to the postsecondary student.
- The system of community colleges uses state general revenue funds to heavily supplement support services provided by federal funds.
- Attention to job placement of vocational education graduates is nearly nonexistent, except through individual institutions.
- Regional planning activities related to implementation of the secondary regional delivery system and the articulation and coordination with community college districts caused districts to assess student needs related to special services.
- The student services committees of the regional delivery systems are recommending services needed by students throughout the region.
- State-developed initiatives are not fully implemented at the local and regional level.
- Federal funds provide all the incentive and support money for special services and programs in vocational education for targeted populations or students with special needs except in community colleges. General revenue and special education funds may be used at the local level to supplement the Perkins funds.
- The only ISBE effort for guidance and counseling is that provided through DAVTE with the federal Perkins funds.
- Information regarding the impact of special programs and support services is not available.
- The effect of the RDS on student services will not be known until the system is implemented for at least a year.
- Information regarding preservice education of guidance counselors for career and occupational counseling was not available.
- State leadership for student services and guidance and counseling is process-oriented versus impact-oriented.
- There is no state-level plan for guidance and counseling and placement services.

- Accountability of student services, including the guidance function, is primarily limited to numbers served.
- Evidence exists to suggest efforts are made to link services provided by various agencies and CBOs to maximize available funds.
- Individual assessment for services needed is limited (although a system is in place for some assessment in community colleges). Generally, need is determined by characteristics of targeted groups (i.e., single parent, dropout) and funds available to provide a service.
- The overall sense of support services is that they are disjointed and fund-driven, rather than individual need-driven.
- The couselor-student ratio is frequently too high for counselors to have adequate time for individualized career counseling with students.
- There appears to be some unrealistic expectations of guidance counselors, particularly in light of the student load each is given.
- There is a general dissatisfaction among vocational educators and the private sector with student knowledge (both youth and adult) pertaining to understanding both the academic knowledge and occupational skills required for various occupations.
- Dissatisfaction about the ability of guidance counselors to provide students with needed career information is frequently expressed by the vocational education and job training communities.
- Job placement of secondary and postsecondary vocational education students does not receive attention equal to that given to obtaining financial aid, scholarships, and admission to educational institutions for students who plan to attend four-year universities.
- Illinois has invested considerable resources into the development of a career information system which offers statewide consistency.
- HORIZONS provides consistent, up-to-date information about occupations, employment opportunities, and educational preparation, but is not universally used throughout the state.
- Few guidance counselors participate in the VIP (internship) program.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED ACTIONS

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education recommends that the Illinois State Board of Education and Illinois Community College Board work cooperatively to improve student services in Illinois by undertaking the following:

- Develop a plan for assisting the RDS's and community college districts to design student services programs which identify the roles, responsibilities, and the services to be delivered and the articulation of these services.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS

The Illinois Council on Vocational Education makes the following suggestions for enhancing special programs, support services, guidance and counseling, and placement services for students.

- Develop a state plan encompassing secondary, postsecondary and adult special programs and support services, which describes the expected status of services in 3–5 years.
- Express concern to the universities about the content and quality of preservice education for guidance counselors.
- Develop a statewide guidance and counseling program which integrates vocational guidance into all guidance and counseling preparation and delivery, rather than segregating it.
- Make internships for all guidance counselors, such as the VIP program, part of the state's plan.
- Encourage guidance counselors to participate in the VIP (internship) program; require participation of the lead RDS guidance counselor.
- Develop an accountability system for support services, including guidance and counseling, and placement services, which measures the impact of the services.
- Assess the secondary RDS and coordination/articulation agreements with community colleges to determine the impact on services for students.
- Support job placement programs for all students at all levels.
- Organize student services, including those for targeted populations into a system that is easily accessed by regions, districts, institutions, other agencies, and individuals who could benefit.
- Work toward implementing the individualized career plan for all students.
- Continue to urge that HORIZONS be accessible to all youth and adults in the State of Illinois who are involved in career decision-making.

- Seek state funds to support guidance and counseling and job placement services in all educational institutions.
- Improve career counseling competence of guidance counselors.
- Encourage coordination between educational guidance personnel and the JTPA assessment personnel.
- Monitor the effectiveness of the six new guidance centers to determine success.
- Develop evaluation and assessment procedures which measure outcome and impact rather than quantitative measures.

RESOURCES

Illinois Community College Board. ***Annual Report FY 1988 Disadvantaged Student Grants, Illinois Community Colleges Provide Advantages for Disadvantaged.*** Springfield, IL. November 1988.

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ICoVE MEMBERSHIP

GERALD W. SCHMIDT
ICoVE Chair, 1988-89
Manager, Training & Public Affairs
Caterpillar, Inc.
Aurora, IL

HON. GORDON L. ROPP
ICoVE Past Chair, 1986-88
State Representative, 88th District
Dairy Farmer
Bloomington, IL

HARTZEL L. BLACK
ICoVE Vice Chair
Dean, Correctional Education
Southeastern Illinois College
Central Administration Office for
Correctional Education
Vienna, IL

ROBERT M. BECKWITH
Manager, Education & Small Business
Depts.
Illinois State Chamber of Commerce
Chicago, IL

RONALD BORELLI
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CBM Computer Center &
James F. Cahill and Co.
Peru, IL

JAMES E. DENNY
Director, Organization/Human
Resource Development
International Minerals & Chemical
Corp.
Mundelein, IL

MARIE MALINAUSKAS
Conference Coordinator
Division of Continuing Education
Southern Illinois University
Carbondale, IL

INA MINSKY
Career Counselor
Jewish Vocational Service
Skokie, IL

RONALD C. MOREHEAD
Field Representative
Illinois AFL-CIO
Manpower Assistance Program
Bloomington, IL

DR. JOSEPH C. PILAND
President
Highland Community College
Freeport, IL

VALEE L. SALONE, Esq., ACSW
Executive Director
Nia-Comprehensive Center for
Developmental Disabilities
Chicago, IL

MARY BETH STINE
System Director
Clay-Jasper-Richland-North Wayne
Regional Vocational System
Flora, IL

GERALD M. SULLIVAN
Secretary/Treasurer
Chicago Journeymen Plumbers
Local #130
Chicago, IL

ICoVE STAFF

PETER JOHNSON
Executive Director

CAROL MOELLMAN
Assistant Executive Director

KRISTI KATCHER
Secretary

PEGGY ITTENBACH
Secretary

ILLINOIS COUNCIL ON
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION
100 Alzina Building
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62702-5186
(217) 782-2892

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